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ARMY TALKS



How I Got Wounded



RESTRICTED • EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS • UNITED STATES ARMY

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR OF



ARMY TALKS

Dear Discussion Leader:

When we were back home, thousands of autoists died every year; their last words being: "I had the right of way!"

Hundreds of thousands were killed or injured in industry yearly, and inquests or inquiry established the cause as carelessness or inexperience.

Back home, they have stop lights and warning signs to try to make driving safer. In factories, they have safety courses, and install guards on machinery.

But war's a grim business. There is nobody to go ahead under enemy fire to post signs reading "Open Field, Don't Advance Across this Area," or "Caution: Snipers in Trees to the Left, 60 Yards Distant," or "Don't Freeze Here: Enemy has it Zeroed."

The army has tried to teach the American soldier the lessons of individual conduct in warfare. Most men don't realize they mean personal safety, and fail to apply them. A high percentage become casualties.

Not all casualties in France are dead. Many have been hospitalized. ARMY TALKS interviewed a number of battle casualties, to find out WHY these men were wounded; WHAT they did that was wrong; HOW their

Issue of ARMY TALKS to units in France has been increased to an average of ten copies per company, or equivalent unit. Under present conditions in the field discussions are impracticable or impossible. For this reason distribution has been increased, so that these ARMY TALKS may be PASSED AROUND FROM MAN TO MAN. As soon as possible issue in the U.K. will be on the basis of three copies per company. If conditions permit discussion, then DISCUSS. If they don't, then see that ARMY TALKS copies CIRCULATE.

injuries could be avoided. ARMY TALKS passes on to others the lessons these Purple Heart wearers learned the hard way.

The wounded men responded in the same spirit—an effort to save you and your men from similar injury. They discuss frankly the mistakes that landed them in hospital beds. Their views differ at times, but all agree that in battle safety is largely up to the individual soldier.

How are you going to present this topic to your men? Will your superior officer be interested in reading this topic, and assist in giving it the greatest possible emphasis—even to allowing more training time for additional discussion? It's a problem that concerns every member of the United States Army, and warrants immediate attention.

THE EDITOR.

"The purpose of the program is to give the soldier psychological preparation for combat, and a better realization of the import of every phase of his military training. Emphasis will be placed on combat orientation. The mental and physical conditioning of the enemy, and a proper evaluation of the enemy's weapons and fighting qualities will be stressed. A better understanding of the background of the war, and the soldier's responsibilities in the post-war world will also be developed. . . ."

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL EISENHOWER.

(Extract from letter ETO, 1 August, 1944, AG 352/2 OpSS, Subject: Combat Orientation Program.)



ARMY TALKS

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

How I Got Wounded

"I could be OK and with my outfit if I'd done the right thing." That's a typical statement of wounded Yanks lying in evacuation hospitals. They made simple mistakes in combat. They had done a wrong thing at the wrong time. They pulled the little boners they'd been warned against back in training camp. They hadn't stayed on the ball.

What were some of these simple errors that had resulted in casualties? ARMY TALKS reporters asked wounded combat veterans in three evacuation hospitals during the Battle of France.

They were asked the circumstances under which they were wounded and to tell what they did for first aid. They were asked what advice they could pass on to their buddies which might prevent their being injured too. Some of them also related incidents which they had witnessed or gave good advice based on their experiences.

Here are their answers. They might well be studied and discussed by every soldier in the United States Army. An 88 shell or a mortar doesn't distinguish between an infantryman and a truck driver, an ordnance expert or the ground crew of a Marauder. It kills or wounds any man who is careless, forgetful or dumb.

If you want to get the lowdown on being wounded "ask the man who owns one." Here's what these wounded men would tell you if you could go to their bedsides and ask for their advice.

Not Alert Enough—Keep Moving

Sgt. (Infantry): We were sent upon a piece of high ground to replace another unit. During the night the Germans moved into positions just ahead of us and the next morning they gave us everything they had. There were plenty of casualties. There were several things that could have been done to cut down casualties. Our guards weren't alert enough. When we looked out in the morning there were six big German tanks facing us in the next field within a hundred and twenty yards of us. It is impossible to move those big tanks that close and not make enough noise to be picked up. What they should do is send out three guards and keep two awake while one sleeps, so there will be no chance of the guards sleeping.

I was the first scout and was given the job of alerting the platoon so I was moving among the men. As I was about to cross the road into the next field an 88 tank opened up in that corner and I was wounded in the leg by a shell fragment. I started back to the bn aid station with another man.

When we were going through a draw just about there an artillery shell landed nearby and I was wounded again. They fixed me up at the aid station and sent us on back.

One of the worst things the men can do which causes casualties is to freeze. Usually it's the new men, but sometimes the old men do too. The shells start falling and they just dig their nose in the dirt and don't even look up. A German can get up on a hedge with a machine pistol and spray the whole bunch of them. They should keep looking around. They can spot him and have a chance to get him before he can get them. You sure can't see anybody if you don't look.

Green Soldiers Are Noisy, Bunch Up

A couple of days ago we were under heavy fire and the company next to us was to withdraw. The old men withdrew through the orchards and over the hedges. The new men didn't. They started back down the road in a bunch. An 88 zeroed down that road and when she let loose there were men and bodies flying all over the place.

When they stop for a rest or a bivouac the men won't lie down as they are supposed. They seem to think nobody can see them though it is sometimes a moonlight night. On a few occasions I have threatened to throw a grenade at them. That gets them down alright.

In spite of all they have been told about it men are continually giving away our position by the noises they make. Usually it's the new men, but sometimes the old men forget, too. When you hear men talking out loud at night you know it's new men. The old men have learned it don't pay to do it. The new men are always fussing with their rifles, making sure they are clean, and you can hear the bolts clicking a long way off. The old men fire her like she is and clean it when they get a break afterwards. When they take a drink the canteen cover slaps the side of the canteen with a bang. Just because the Germans don't shoot at these noises doesn't mean they don't hear them. They know where you are and watch till they see something to shoot at—then they really let you have it.

Obey Your Orders—There's A Reason

New men just don't seem to realize the importance of following orders. The other day we all received orders not to eat our rations or drink water until ordered to do so by the CO. When we got up to the front where we were going into battle and were given orders to eat, a lot of the new men had already eaten their rations and had drunk all their water. The other men had to share with them because you couldn't let them go hungry. This may not seem to be related to battle casualties, but the better men fight the fewer the casualties, and men who are hungry and thirsty don't fight as well; they give up easier.

When I was wounded there were others wounded by the same shell. The man next to me didn't even look to see how badly he was wounded.



He just started yelling, "Medics, Medics." Others were calling too. The yelling drew a new burst of fire in our direction.

Pvt. (Infantry): If you have any weapon, fire, and then move on or you get grenade or machine gun fire right back. Never cross an opening in these hedges—they're really zeroed in.

Men should not drink all their water. You need plenty of water to take sulfa-diozene pills.

1st Sgt. (Infantry): Our company was the left assault company on the mission and I was with the advanced CP group. We had advanced 700 yards without any trouble and were moving along a hedgerow next to a road. We moved down into a draw along the road and they started shelling the position with 88's. I knew we couldn't stay there so I started off across the field to make contact with the rest of our unit. A sniper got me through the hand and I got back into the draw where one of the men put powder on my hand and wrapped it up. I advised the others to stay there until they had a better chance to move, and another fellow who was wounded and I got out on the road and started back for the aid station. They opened up on us with machine guns. I don't know how they missed us, but we got through without being hit again.

Don't Go Through Open Fields

That's what happened to me, but I have seen men do plenty of things that caused casualties which could have been avoided. Three days ago we were on an attack and the shells started falling pretty thick and the men got excited and started bunching in one corner of the field. Then two machine guns opened up and shot their legs full of bullets.

Yesterday our party was moving ahead and we were led straight through an open field. There was a ridge ahead and the Germans were set up on it. One of our party was hit while we were crossing the field, but that was only part of it. It gave our position away and they pinned us down and tossed mortar and artillery shells at us from then on. It takes a little longer to go around and keep under cover, but you get further and you don't lose as many men.

My advice to men is to stay off the roads and keep off the traveled paths because it's nine out of ten that they have them covered with machine guns.

Pfc (Infantry, hit by mortar through shoulder): Make sure you dig deep. Cover hole with anything to keep fragments off. Keep mouth open—that helps from concussion.

We had a chance to dig in along a hedgerow and the men dug their holes too close together. They didn't shell us that time, but if they had they would have gotten three or four of them with one shell.

There's one thing about the 88. If you get even a shallow, low place in the ground you are pretty safe unless you get a direct hit.



Leave things alone you find laying around.

(This man also reports other men in his outfit as saying that if they are found by the Germans with German coins, weapons, or other souvenirs, they are shot. Says he is not sure about this, but he is sure he is not going to pick up any souvenirs for this reason as well as because they're booby-trapped.)

We've been taught the Germans were a pushover but that's plenty wrong. When he pulls back he pulls back fighting.

Never go to a prisoner, make him come to you. While you frisk him make sure he's covered.

Tanks attracted attention and drew fire, but it's a welcome feeling to see tanks and the air corps—it boosts a guy's morale.

I got a brother—I hope he's taking heed—training means very much—10 minutes of combat will bring some of it back to you, 20 minutes will bring it all.

Medics Do A Grand Job

Didn't do very much to myself when I was hit. Medics were too close. Lots of 'em don't seem to appreciate the medics and what they're doing. Never get excited, excitement takes a lot of lives.

Pvt. (Infantry): We'd just had a rest and was moving up at night to an objective around —. We spotted a big German gun and them and set up a defense there. We did a little digging but we didn't want to make any noise and get their attention, so I dug as far as I could without making

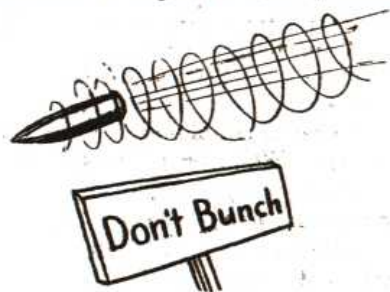
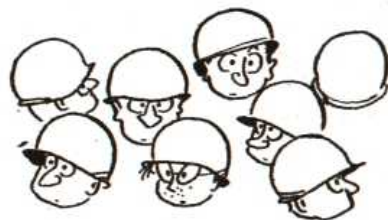
any noise. About 3 o'clock we heard rifle fire at the company on our right, and at 5.30 it came at us from all directions, small arms, light mortars and grenades. We didn't fire until daybreak so we couldn't give our position away. The captain sent me with two others to get some TD. I went back to my hole. I hadn't eaten and I was just opening my pack to get something to eat when it hit me. I didn't hear it. Then I went into my Sgt.'s foxhole with a hole in my helmet. It must have been a mortar. One thing I knew, when you get hit don't get excited; it was just instinctive with me when I was hit to dive for the hole. I woke up there. If I'd been down in it opening my pack instead of above I might not have got hit. Same thing happened the first day on the beach. One fellow got hit and got excited and jumped out of his hole and got hit for good then.

Make Your Own Hedgerow Holes

Pvt. (Infantry, hit in the shoulder and left thigh): We moved up to attack about 8 a.m. Sunday morning. Three hedgerows away the Germans let loose with everything they had. They had them zeroed in and had observers watching. Soon as we moved in—"Wham!"

(This man showed interviewer his helmet which was under his bunk. There was a jagged hole about $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. long and $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide through the steel and through the helmet liner, as well as through a thin piece of paper he had in his helmet. But it had not even scratched him. The helmet had taken the full force of the fragment.)

Keep out of a bunch. The minute you bunch up they let you have it. Men bunch up for company or have to in order to keep in contact. When



you get into battle you just naturally want to get close—like to all get in same foxhole when bombers come over—but we learned the hard way—don't bunch.

About mortars—shell hits trees, limbs. Stay away from hedgerows. Soon as they hit hedgerows they burst.

Was bleeding badly as I crawled back. Found first aid man about 20 minutes later. First aid man gave me a shot of morphine and put my bandage on. (When asked whether he had taken any pills he said he hadn't as he did not have any water with him. Later in the interview when asked about what advice he would give to new men he said, "Take pills—wrap up and wait till somebody picks you up.")

Pvt. (Infantry): It was to the right out of —. We were attacking a high hill. I was covering the squad advance, keeping the Germans' heads down over on the next hedgerow. I was coming across the field. Then all of a sudden I was hit and then I heard it. The rest of the platoon was covering us, but the MG was on our right flank. *That flank should have been covered.* You should always have flank protection when you have an open flank.

I got hit on my leg like it was paralyzed. I put my first aid powder on it and the pad. I took all eight of my pills and a canteen of water. We hadn't had time to drink up water so I had it all.

Save Some Water For Those Pills

Pvt. (Infantry): It was a mile from —. A bunch of machine guns were dug in and we were making an assault. They were dug in and we had to go after them with bayonets. We jumped off at 6 o'clock to go 400 yards between us and where they were dug in. The officer called for a bayonet attack. We went to within nine yards of them, crawling and making short rushes, two or three feet at a time and falling and rolling. They were firing everything at us, and an 88 burst got me and two others. I got a hunk of metal in my leg.

I dragged a Lt. that was hit over to the hedgerow where there was cover. My wound wasn't bleeding so bad, but I put the bandage and some powder on it, but I didn't take the pills. I was a little excited at the time so I didn't take 'em. I was so busy not getting hit again, and I'd given the Lt. my water with his pills.

I was too careless. If I'd hit the ground in time I wouldn't have gotten this. I got a little careless.

S/Sgt. (Infantry): The company was attacking a hill eight or ten miles beyond —. Our squad was in support of the company. The company attacked and the Germans had left a delaying force on a flank. We turned



on them and the Germans came down the hill at us. I was ordered to hold the Germans back on hedgerow till we could act as a defense. They came down right at us, and got several men with mortars and small arms. I gave my squad orders to withdraw and me and the BAR man and the first scout stayed to cover the squad's withdrawal. They got all three of us. I jumped a hedgerow and was right on top of it when the Schmeiser

pistol got me, from about four feet away. I ran about 800 yards back to the rest of the platoon.

I got back to the aid man and he cut my equipment off and bandaged the wound (bullet wounds in shoulder and chest). Then I was waiting to get back to an aid station; I was wounded about nine and it was about twelve when we got there, and I couldn't take the pills because when the medico had cut my equipment off, he'd cut my belt and all with my first aid packet and my canteen. They gave me the pills at the aid station when we got there in about three hours.



Can't think of anything—somebody had to hold back till the company set up a defense, and it's better to lose two or three than a whole company. Tell them that if a man is wounded, try to get back to his own lines. If he can't, keep quiet. The company will check up and look for you, and somebody will come and get you.

S/Sgt. (Infantry): We were going into enemy territory where paratroopers had been dropped. They let our lead squad through, then closed in on our platoon, surrounding us. Several of the men got panicky and some even forgot their rifles when they started to move off. I tried to shake them out of their panic. I've found that getting them mad at you some way helps about as much as anything. We were moving across an open space from one hedgerow to the next hedgerow when an explosive shell landed near by mangling the man next to me. I was lucky, I was only hit in the leg. I kept on going to the hedgerow and from there I moved on back to a sunken road where I took some pills and was given first aid by a medic.

Keep Low—And You'll Stay Healthy

Men should keep down unless they have some reason to be up. Many times an observer will report something and three or four will jump to look. It isn't at all necessary. The one man is enough to report the movement and extra men give away your position, and it just makes a bunch of men to be shot at.

Don't send a single man on a mission. Send two of them. Snipers will pick off one man but they will let two or three men alone. That is unless the shelling is heavy so their shots won't be heard. The same thing is true about guard. Put two or more men on guard.

The Germans have a trick of firing overhead fire with one machine gun and firing low grazing fire with another, shooting ball ammunition. You try to crawl under the tracer fire and you get hit by the other which you can't see. Five of the men in our platoon were killed that way yesterday.

If the Germans can command two slopes of a hill with grazing fire from a hedgerow that is their favourite position, so watch it.

The other day our platoon was moving across a field. For the most of the way we followed the hedgerow and used what cover we could find. Then, because it was shorter, we cut across the corner towards the other hedgerow. The Germans waited until twelve men were out in the open then they opened up with a machine gun. They got three men. If we had stayed on that hedgerow we wouldn't have had a casualty.

Our battalion was digging in for the night when a couple of observer planes came over. We weren't careful enough about camouflage because a little while later they came over and pattern bombed us. We were lucky and they only got three, but it could have been a hell of a lot worse.

They know it, but lots still don't do it. If you have a few minutes in a spot you should spend it digging.

Pvt. (Infantry, punctured lung): It was six miles out of —. The company was trying to hold the left flank in a defensive position. The Germans were pushing in with tanks. They threw mortars, tank fire and grenades at us. A mortar lobbed into a tree opposite me and a piece of shell hit me. I went out, then tried to get up. The guy next to me told me to lay down.

Dig Foxholes Deeper—It's Safer

I was digging at the time. Before I'd been down about two feet when they told us we was pulling out, so we didn't dig any more. They came around later and told us we was going to stay so I was going to dig down in more, but they started shelling before I got any more dug. The whole squad got it on this one.

Pvt. (Infantry): In hedgerow fighting dig foxholes under hedgerows. Reason I got hit is I wasn't dug under. I was hit by an 88. Dig in under hedgerows. It is safer than beside hedgerows. Boards or wood on top of the hole will keep fragments out.



Pfc (Infantry): It was south of —. The company was just a holding force. I was in my foxhole when a shell hit in the next hole to me. I got a wound in the arm, concussion of my ear drums and powder burns.

My hole was down about two and a half feet. If it'd been down a little more I wouldn't have gotten anything.

Pfc (Infantry): Be careful of mines. I ran into a minefield. I thought it was clear and wasn't looking for mines. My feet hit one of those little prongs sticking up from an S mine. When I hit it, it made a little spawing sound. I was nervous and so jumped out of the way. The jump was what saved my neck.

I was pinned down by MG and they let mortars go. As soon as you're able to move, get out from under fire. If they ever stop you behind hedgerows they lay everything they got on you. If men start advancing they should never stop because then they lay all their mortar and artillery fire on.

Don't Ever Stop In The Field

Pfc (Infantry): The company was on an attack advancing up from an orchard. Only small arms fire was coming at us. The guy next to me got hit as we went across. He called on me to help him. I stopped and looked over at him and told him I couldn't come over. I had to keep firing, but I went down on my knee there and then the bullet came at me from the same place and got me across the hips. It was a sniper—it came in from above. I'd seen the bullets hitting the dirt around me while I was there.

I glanced down to see how bad it was, then jumped up and kept moving to the hedgerow. Our platoon moved back even with the other platoon. I laid there till they got the others out and then I showed one of the men, not a medic, but helping with the wounded men. He bandaged it up and put powder on it. He gave me two sulfa pills. He just gave me two. I knowed I should take eight, but he gave me two and I didn't think.

Don't ever stop in the field. They'll get you every time. A man's got a far better chance if he moves on. While I was still there, not running, he was hitting them all around us. The boy next to me got hit and the S/Sgt. on the other side. Keep moving till you get to the next hedgerow. They are just waiting for you to stop to get you.

Pvt. (Medics): When some men put sulfa powder on they put too much on. Powder should be put on very lightly.

Medical men carry too much in their pouches. All they should carry is—sulfa, carlisle dressing, morphine. First aid men should carry cigarettes. A cigarette to a wounded man is a great lift.

Know How Evacuation Works

All battalion sections should know the way of evacuation. My section works it this way. We have a phone with the company CP. When anybody gets hurt the company CP calls up and we send up a litter, bearers go out to get the man. They bring the man back to the peep and they are taken right to the aid station.



12 COMBAT LESSONS THAT PAY OFF



(AND WE DON'T MEAN INSURANCE . . .)

1. **Stay Scattered, Don't Bunch**—
at chow, on breaks, in the field
2. **Dig that Fox-hole Deep**—
so the rump is down
3. **Grab Cover Wherever You Are**
4. **Keep Moving**—
even when you're hit
5. **Don't Freeze**—you're a
good target if you do
6. **Be Quiet**—cut out the chatter
7. **ObeY Orders**—whether they
make sense to you or not
8. **Forget Souvenirs**—
they make nice booby-traps
9. **Make Your Own Holes**—
when going through hedgerows
10. **Have the Flanks Covered**
11. **Always Have Water for Pills**
12. **Make Jerry Put his Hands Up**—
we mean UP!

YOU'LL GROW OLDER, GET WISER



IF YOU REMEMBER THESE RULES

Lots of men forget they have a first aid packet. When pinned down men can't get at their first aid packets. A red cross in white on helmet makes good target at night.

Pvt. (Armored Corps): When we were attacked, men left vehicles to take cover. Guns were left unattended. Command jeep run around—and Germans watch for them.

Stay away from burning vehicles—there's ammo all over the place.

Tanks should have position before dark to pull into.

When Germans counter-attacked they whoop and holler to make men fire and to cause panic and give position away. Hold fire until you see the enemy.

Always get your escape route ready.

Loose Talk Over Wire Costs Lives

S/Sgt. (Infantry, on Communications): Men violate security rules—they will get on radio and say almost anything on radio which enemy can pick up. Let operators operate radio.

It is almost impossible to lay wire during the attack. Wire should be laid to companies in defensive positions. Keep regiment line on at all times. Never let it go out so that you can keep in touch with higher headquarters—otherwise you don't know what's going on.

We don't have enough men in the communications platoon. They should be armed with different weapons. M1's are too awkward and heavy to carry and we don't do enough shooting to carry M1's.

S/Sgt. (Infantry. Came in on D-day, hit by mortar shell on back of neck): Men in squads don't keep in contact with each other. Stay away from trees. As soon as a man is hit he should get away from that spot.

Treat yourself if you possibly can. Take your pills and don't forget to drink the water. Put a compress on the wound. Use a tourniquet if it is spurting.



Be very careful in handling prisoners. They are valuable as sources of information. But watch them. Always make prisoners come to you. Never go to them. I made that mistake once. Never again. I've seen them come out with grenades and machine pistols hidden and then open up

S/Sgt. (Infantry): Get away from where they have you covered, with a machine gun—like I said.

When we got down to the sunken road the platoon Sgt. was down there, some Germans were down the road. He saw one walking down the road. He thought he was going to surrender so he motioned him to come on. He had his gun and fired and got the platoon Sgt. in the leg.



That learned me something right there. He acted as if he was going to give up, just walking down the road with his gun. I'm telling you when that guy was walking we had a chance to lay him and didn't. Absolutely shoot him if he's got a gun, regardless of whether he looks like he's going to surrender or not. The only damn Jerry I'd let come towards me would have his hands over his head.

Sgt. (Infantry): Our outfit was moving ahead as a spearhead for three divisions. We had had some rough going and there were only eight men left in my platoon. I was heading my men because some of them were new and were scared. I walked right into three Germans. It surprised us both. I fired a clip at them and was loading another when one of them stepped behind a tree and fired his machine pistol at me, hitting me twice through the chest and once through the arm.

This War Ain't A Picnic

Some of the men in our company started a wood fire to cook their dinner. The smoke gave our position away and the enemy artillery shelled us all afternoon.

Men know they are not supposed to bunch up, but they do it anyway. You frequently see bunches when the mail orderly brings the mail.

In the excitement and confusion of battle men often drop their weapons and equipment. Sometimes the Germans use our weapons right back at us, especially our machine guns and BAR.

Pvt. (Infantry): Take orders from officers. Keep low and keep spread apart. Let two or three men go up first, then let others come up. These Germans dig in. You don't know where they're coming from.

Call for medic. If he can't get to you, go to him. I had to crawl 50-75 yards. The first aid man tied my thigh and told me to drink sulfa tablets.

S/Sgt. (Armored Corps, mortar wounds): German prisoners of war say Americans smoke too much and talk too much and too loud—boys smoke all night in their foxholes. They say our uniforms don't blend with foliage. Jerries have healthy respect for our men's shooting ability and great respect for our artillery. But get this down. Germans are soldiers to the very last. They will fight until they are ordered to stop fighting. Germans handle 50mm. mortar and 81mm. mortar with great skill, as if they were rifles.

Everybody is scared. It is a question of admitting it, then facing it. Anybody who says he is not scared is either lying or something is wrong with him.

Watch Out For Booby Traps

Pvt. (Infantry): I wasn't wounded by shell fire. I was camouflaging a half-track when they bombed the field. The concussion threw me off the half-track causing a bad sprain.

One of the men in our company walked into an old barn a couple of days ago. He saw a ball on the bench and picked it up to see what it was. It went off and blew his fingers off. Men should be more careful what they pick up, especially in buildings and along hedgerows.

Pvt. (Infantry, machine gun or rifle bullet in the arm): Our company was in reserve, then we moved up. We were called on to knock out a machine gun. Our squad was leading. I was second scout. The first scout got by. I got hit and yelled to the man in front to lie down. The Lt. looked at me and told me to go back.



Keep your eyes open and observe everything you possibly can. Dig in good. Dig into bank. Dig deep. Something they ought to get more practice on while in the States is scouting and patrolling. All they did in the States was hike and sleep in tents.

I didn't take any pills because I didn't know how much water to take. I met the first aid man soon after I was hit. He put my first aid packet on and told me to take the pills. My advice is to put your own first aid packet on if no first aid man is handy, and keep cool.

Pfc (Infantry, machine gun bullet in right foot): (This man was escorting civilians back to be questioned. He was told by his CO to return when they were delivered. On his way back to the front he was stopped by machine gun fire. A captain, whom he didn't know, asked him to go with him to wipe out the machine gun nest. It resulted in two men getting killed, two wounded.)

We wouldn't have been hit if we weren't bunched up—all in a damn column—couldn't help but get us all. Every time the enemy sees a whole bunch of men together they fire.

I crawled back to the other side of the hedgerow and put sulfa powder on my foot. I couldn't take pills because I had no water. I'd been very busy and didn't have time to get water. I walked back half a mile and was picked up by a jeep. I know now to always to try to carry a canteen full of water—that's why I couldn't take my pills.

Don't throw rifles or ammo away. Germans take advantage and pick it up. A lot of men throw their stuff away when it gets heavy—packs, rifles, etc., so they can run faster. We killed a German with an M1, three bandoleers of ammo, seven or eight rifle grenades and a launcher. He had been using it. One man in our company was hit. Germans shoot our stuff and we don't know the difference.

Sgt. (Tanks): We'd just moved into a new area and just dug our holes when the 88's started coming. A smoke shell came first and then the second one got me. I was going to the message center when it started. I wasn't near any hole. The second one lit about eight feet from me and it gave me the Purple Heart and a rest. I got three pieces of shell, in my leg and back and neck, but they say they want to send me to a General Hospital and I don't want to go anywhere I won't be able to get back to my outfit.

One of the boys saw my leg was bleeding and right out in the middle of the bombardment a Captain of the medics, a dentist, came out, bandaged it, put sulfa powder on it and gave me a shot of morphine. Then he sent me back to an aid station.

Carelessness Means Trouble

I didn't have my belt or steel hat on, which I should have, too. You get pretty cocky after a month of not getting hit. If I'd been near a hole I wouldn't have been hit. I'd tell them to have your hat, belt and hole near you at all times.

Pvt. (Medics): We'd just pulled into this area, about two blocks outside of —, about 6.30. They were on a hill above us to our right. The battalion had gone too far forward. We didn't have time to dig in. Several started it and they started shooting at us so we went for cover—an apple orchard. Patients were coming in.

I carried seven back to the clearing station and came back for more and lead was coming in. I jumped into a ditch and this shell came in right after me.

Get a hole dug as soon as possible, if there's any chance, that's my advice. I went in without fear and it makes you think now. Dig in. My advice to the medics is—take care of yourself first and then take care of your patients or you won't be able to take care of them at all. Keep as cool as you can.

S/Sgt. (Infantry): Don't let 'em get you pinned down. When they do they signal the 88's. We had to get out, that's when I stuck my head out to fire. Keep moving. Don't let 'em keep you down. If you hear the old machine pistol get going, the old 88 is coming in. They signal with the machine pistol. At night they fire tracers. I've seen them fire two from different directions to intersect to point you out.

Have Those Flanks Covered

S/Sgt. (Infantry): We had advanced about six miles when we ran into some mortar fire which pinned us down. We were along a hedgerow and bunched up too close. A mortar shell dropped in and got several of us.

One thing a unit should always do is protect its flanks. We haven't been caught that way but I know a squad that was. They were advancing and one of their men was wounded in route. They advanced to a hedgerow and started to dig in. They didn't post any security on their flanks and everybody dug. The Germans set up a machine gun at the end of the hedgerow and killed every one of them except the man who was wounded.

Sgt. (Infantry): I was wounded in the hand, arm and leg with a German rifle grenade. We were the right flank platoon and on the advance. During the night we moved into a position which was somewhat of a trap. Jerry got in on our right flank and set up machine guns, and grenades. He got in behind an embankment. They knocked out our machine gun because our men set it up in an opening. Jerry fires at all the openings. A grenade came over the hedge and got me. My platoon Sgt. was knocked out and I was leading the platoon at the time. We lost contact with our right flank squad. We should have maintained contact, they wouldn't have gotten in on our flank without us knowing it.

I bandaged up my arm after putting sulfa powder on it but didn't wait to have my leg bandaged as it would take too long. I took my platoon back to the next hedgerow to reorganize and the CO sent me back to the aid station.

Their machine gun fire was high but the mortar fire was accurate.

Don't Leave Foxhole Unless Ordered

Pfc (Infantry): When the enemy starts to counter-attack the men seem to get scared. They bunch up and try to get away. What you should do is fire back to get their (the Germans) heads down. Don't get too frightened when the Germans counter-attack. Their machine pistol is the most harassing thing there is; they work in behind our lines. Try and give yourself first aid. Leave first aid for those who are wounded seriously. Drink water sparingly so you can have some left if wounded.

Pfc (Infantry): When you're on the front line—stay in your foxhole unless it's necessary for you to get out.

When the 88's start coming hit the ground and bury your face in the ground. Pull your helmet on back of your head. Body should be flat on ground, when advancing and there is no foxhole.



The men stir around too much and give their positions away. They should not move around.

It would be a good idea for a company officer or non-com to check and see whether all men have powder, pills, first aid packet and water before they go in.

The White Flag May Mean Danger

Pfc (Infantry): Germans raised white flag—when we stopped firing they fired the more.

Watch the trees for snipers. The Japanese are teaching the Germans how to snipe. (When asked to give more information on this he said that some men in his own outfit had captured some Jap snipers and he had seen them himself.)

Do not pick up souvenirs, pistols, helmets, etc. One of the men in my outfit got his leg blown off because he tried to pick up a German helmet as a souvenir. The company commander advised the men not to pick up anything. Five of our men were killed on hedgerow booby traps.

Sgt. (Infantry): There were three Germans coming down the draw and I thought they were going to surrender. I stood up and started motioning them up as I speak a little German. Some one behind them shot me with a rifle. My men shot the three Germans. I walked back to the battalion aid station, where I was given first aid treatment.

New men are slow approaching the next hedgerow. When you go over one hedgerow you run like hell for the next one, keeping crouched all the time, so you can't be seen from the field beyond.

I think snipers are artillery observers and serve a dual purpose. They are the ones who direct the fire on us.

One of our men stepped on a mine and heard it snap and rise. He jumped straight up in the air. The mine went off and never hurt him.

Scouts and patrols are quite safe usually and the job is not as dangerous

as one would think. They let them go by but when the company goes over the same route they will blast them.

Cpl. (Mortar Gunner): When told to dig in, dig in plenty deep. It pays to dig.

Men should freeze when flares drop. They have a wonderful flare. We were taught that in basic training.

I lost my buddy. He got too excited when he got hit and stood up. Then they shot him down. I tried to pull him down when he got up and they got me. When a man gets hit he should keep cool and go to a battalion aid station. As long as you're not bleeding so bad you're OK.

Lots of our own men get shot by wearing fatigue clothes. Fatigues look too much like German uniforms.

Souvenirs Too Hot To Handle

Leave souvenirs alone. Even enemy wounded may be booby trapped. I saw one wounded German with three traps attached to him. When our men came up to him he motioned them away, otherwise somebody would have gotten hurt.

Pfc (Infantry): Good idea to use purifying tablets when taking water from farmhouses. I knew some men who drank water and became sick. They got water from a farmhouse and didn't put any tablets in.

In defense, it is a good idea to lay tin and boards over foxhole and cover it with dirt for protection from shell fragments and ack-ack. I was saved from a piece of flak by doing that. Most men do it.

Dig in under hedgerow, not on the side. Then when shells hit hedgerow you're safe. Jerry has them dug that way. Look around before you use Jerry's foxhole. If it looks okay in daylight, it's okay to use it.

Replacements are hard to control. They don't work together. They don't know other men and are not used to working together.



Sgt. (Ordnance): I got some lead in my mouth, knocking off some teeth. I should have faced the bank when I hit the ground instead of facing out. It's a good precaution to take.

Sgt. (Infantry): I have only been in combat about five days, I noticed that when a shell falls in a field anywhere around they all get excited.

Never pick up German weapons and fire them—our own men open up on them. Our men know the sound of German weapons and fire on them.

Pvt. (Infantry): I got mine jumping over a hedgerow. Never jump over them. Go around them. Men shouldn't go out by themselves because of the danger from snipers.

At night, if somebody fires, don't fire at him unless you see him—the light gives you away. If you are on outpost, maybe it is better not to dig in if too close to the enemy. They hear the shovels and can spot your position.



Men bunch up and don't pay attention to the signals. A lot of men think that when it's your time to get hit you get hit. I believe it myself but I think you should do everything possible to avoid it.

We were going on the right of another company and waiting for the other company. We were sitting in a corner and kind of bunched up, that's natural. But it's a mistake to do it. I didn't hear the shell but it burst right by me and I saw my hand was opened up. I tried to walk away but I could not get far because I had wounds in my leg. I got excited like many others and began shouting for medics, which brought more shells over. Two fellows were killed by them.

Pfc (Infantry, 20 days in combat): I walked into an ambush last night and was hit by a potato masher. We always used to look for them in a tree and in the hedgerow but we found them in the high grass in the fields too.

Those 88's Are Dangerous Stuff

When 88's start coming they're going to come from one direction. They splatter in whatever direction they're going. When I hear an 88 coming, if I think it's going over me, OK, it splatters away. If I think it's going to hit before or on the side of me I hit the ground with my feet facing wherever I think it's going to land. In other words my head is always away from where they're shooting. A guy in another division once told me about this and I've been trying it ever since. It works.

Don't throw purifying tablets away. A lot of men throw theirs away. Not me, I drink a lot of water—haven't got sick yet. One of the best things the Army issues is purifying tablets.

They have all logical places for protection for us zeroed in—if there is not a booby trap there they have an automatic weapon covering it.

We use sunken roads and dig down sideways, below the surface, to make foxholes. That gives the best protection from air and ground.

Jerry sure is tricky. He'll do anything in the world to get you to say something or show yourself so he can throw mortars at you.

They let you walk through them. They're too smart for our scouts to see. Then they open fire. Look every place for Jerry, not only where you expect him to be.

Don't look too high for them in trees. They don't go up too high. They have better support down below and they're not against the skyline on the lower branches. Also it is easier to see movements on top of trees against the skyline.

Don't Lose Contact—Keep In Touch

Sgt. (Infantry): They dig positions in the middle of the row and get up and fire a few shots, then crawl out. Don't put your head over the fence. Snipers shoot up green flares to let their planes know where your front lines are. Then they strafe that spot.

I saw them shoot one of our medics too, when they couldn't help seeing what he was.

I tried to get my packet off but couldn't. My Lt. took it off and fixed up my arm. Don't lose contact. We lost several men just because we lost contact. Maintain contact all the time. Just keep pushing, don't let up. That's the thing to do.

If you hit the ground for artillery then move out as soon as the burst has gone. They couldn't fight if they didn't have their 88's.



An examination of the "case studies" in this issue reveals that many of them made the same mistakes. Careful surveys of combat casualties indicate that most men get hit because they neglect some simple combat precaution. Copy the list of rules on pages 12-13, obey them in the field and **STAY HEALTHY.**

How to prepare this Army Talk

DEAD men tell no tales, but wounded men do. It has been said more than once: "this is a strange war." So it is—and never before have we been in a position to learn so much from the men on the business end of the game.

The men who are responsible for this ARMY TALKS are writing it for every man in the Army. As they have learned, no one is immune from enemy action. Jerry has never bothered to discriminate between civilians and the military. He makes less effort to discriminate between the SOS soldier, the medics, engineers and the combat infantryman.

In previous wars the historians and commentators have spent the years that followed in pointing out what really happened. Tactics and strategy have been discussed at length, and undoubtedly will be again. But never before have we been able to get combat lessons *to you* which can save *your* life—from men who almost lost theirs in learning them.

The more you study the evidence the more you realize that there are a half-dozen basic rules which cannot be fooled with: you remember them, and you will probably live: you forget them, and you're asking for what will come your way.

There is nothing more valuable to you than your life. There is nothing more serious than learning to fight and preserve your life while doing it. The stuff in this issue of ARMY TALKS goes right down that alley. Don't shove it away, with a few well-placed adjectives. They bury dead Americans just the way they bury dead Germans.

In the discussion try to get a man who has been in combat; if there is a hospital near ask one of the soldiers convalescing to sit in on the group. Make the men realize that this is a very serious matter and get them to talk about it. When the practical side is finished you will have plenty of chance to get into battle psychology, intuition and normal reactions. There need be no end to the topic. Keep yourself down to 10 or 15 minutes to introduce the subject. Tear out the center spread and put it on the bulletin board. If there is no bulletin board let the men put copies in their helmets, and pass them around.

If there is no chance for discussion read your copy of ARMY TALKS and pass it on to the next fellow.



ARM Y TALKS and "Warweek" are in the field, and are going where the GIs go. ARMY TALKS are not interested in writing stuff out of an ivory tower. They are in the business of making combat lessons available to every man in the Army. In this issue wounded men have gone all out to prevent other men from getting wounded.

ARMY TALKS is not merely a purveyor of news or information about the enemy. It is a battle weapon of value. It can help you to fight and it can help you to kill men whose one object is to kill you.




Tune in on your American Forces Network station for a dramatized presentation of the week's ARMY TALK.  Put it in with your talk, use it as a self-starter for the discussion.

Time: Saturday, 16 September, 1944, at 1430-1500 hours.

Choose any convenient spot where you have a radio and a room for your platoon to listen in and follow up discussing the subject.



The subject matter of this week's ARMY TALK will appear in an illustrated GI digest in the "Warweek" supplement of "Stars and Stripes" on **Thursday, 15 September, 1944.** 

Purpose: to enable the soldier to enter the discussion with prior knowledge of the subject. "Warweek," official orientation organ for the ETO, is striving to make the American soldier in this theater the best informed soldier in the world.

If you need advice or wish to make suggestions regarding topics for discussion write to Editor, ARMY TALKS, Special Service Division, H.Q., Com 2, ETOUSA, APO 887, U.S. Army. We want your ideas, we like to hear how your talks proceed, and—believe it or not—we won't even object to some backtalk from you.

On Saturday, 23 September and thereafter ARMY TALKS on the air will be heard at 1030 hours.